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EDITORIALS

A STATE ELECTION YEAR—NEW RE-APPORTIONMENT IN THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

This Is a State Election Year.—All do or should know that this is a state election year. The recent primary election was held in August and the candidates representing the different political parties have now been nominated and await the final decision of the citizens of California, which will be rendered in the November election.

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Proper Maintenance of Public Health Standards Is a Civic and Medical Responsibility.—The members of the California Medical Association and their official journal, CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE, are not interested in political parties or in the representatives of political parties, as such. They are, however, very much interested in the attitude which elective executive and administrative officers hold toward public health problems.

Members of the medical profession cannot escape their special responsibilities in the maintenance of proper public health standards. A foundation principle in good citizenship in a republican form of government makes it obligatory for every citizen to offer to the state the best judgment and efforts of which he or she is capable, in so far as the maintenance of govern-

mental standards having to do with the general welfare are concerned.

Medical men and women are by their training specially fitted to give superior or expert advice on the solution of public health problems. Such counsel, when given by experienced physicians to lay executives or legislators who may be holding civic positions should not fall on indifferent, unwilling or antagonistic ears. To that extent, therefore, physicians should make it their business to know somewhat of the viewpoints of candidates for public office, and to sound out such candidates as to their general attitude on public health problems of California, so that, if possible, only such candidates shall be elected to office who will give loyal support to desirable public health measures.

Such interrogation of candidates can be best done through properly constituted public policy and legislation committees of county and state medical societies, these committees in turn communicating the results and impressions obtained in such conferences with candidates, to the members of their respective societies, so that individual physicians and the friends of physicians may be placed in better position to exercise wise judgment in the selection of the candidates for whom they will cast their votes.

It is not necessary for such committees, in every instance, to espouse the candidacy of one particular candidate for each office. Where candidates with proper backgrounds and creditable past records aspire to the same office, committees on public policy and legislation can very properly state that each such candidate is acceptable, leaving it to individual medical friends of each such candidate to give such special support as under the circumstances might seem warranted, if that should be deemed necessary or desirable.

In all this work, committees on public policy and legislation should make a special effort to refrain from improper partisanship, for partisanship is only permissible under special conditions. That is, special partisanship for one candidate may be justified, when the opposing candidate has a record of real or very probable antagonism to the maintenance of proper public health standards. The reasons for such antagonism it is not necessary to emphasize, or to specially dwell upon. It is enough to know that a certain candidate is opposed, for this, that or the other reason, to sane public health legislation and administration. That fact once properly established, then such a candidate should not receive the suffrages of members of the medical profession or of those lay citizens holding viewpoints on public health that are in general accord with those held by physicians.

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The New Senatorial and Assembly Reapportionment.—Members of the medical profession belong to one of the learned professions and because of special scholastic training are assumed to have an understanding of citizenship and gov-